

Minnesota Universal Health Care Coalition Newsletter

April 2008

Greetings!

Spring is finally here, and I hope each of you is finding some time to be outside. News and events on health care in Minnesota are everywhere, and this newsletter highlights a few of them. They include:

- A quick summary of current status in our state legislature
- Next Steps in the legislative process
- Results of a survey done by Physicians for a National Health Plan
- Constituents meet with their representative

Discussion on Single Payer is everywhere. We have a [brand new web-site!](#) Please check the events section to get a glimpse of what is going on. There are community events, television and radio interviews, panel discussions and conferences. MUHCC's presence is being increasingly requested, heard and being noted.

Our presence and influence in the legislature is gaining ground, and much of it is because, we the people are speaking up and asking for real health care reform.

We are especially interested in hosting events with legislators. If you would like to host one, please go to www.muhcc.org/contact. We will work with you to start a thoughtful conversation with your Senator and/or Representative.

Thank you,
Santwana Dasgupta
MUHCC Community Organizer

Health Care on Capitol Hill - Current Status

The House and Senate have each passed major health care bills which are now are headed to conference committee where their differences will be worked out. The House bill, HF 3391, is sponsored by **Rep. Tom Huntley (D.Duluth)** and the Senate bill, SF 3099, is sponsored by **Senator Linda Berglin (D. Mpls).**

Among the positive measures in the bill are mandated **studies on costs** of various health care proposals, an **expansion of MinnesotaCare**, and subsidies to make health care more affordable. However, it is not clear how either of the latter will be funded.

Among the bills' drawbacks are a payment system that will be **financially burdensome for Greater Minnesota providers**; a complicated new **report card** system striving to measure providers success in patient treatment; and the new multi- million Health Care Transformation Commission which is charged with coming up with new proposals for health care and screening other ideas. **Also, the bills do nothing about the existing costly administrative bureaucracies of health plans and insurance companies.**

Over the past several weeks MUHCC members and organizational affiliates have done a great job of contacting legislators, urging them to support costs studies and voicing concerns over onerous provisions. Both House and Senate bills would have resulted in more wasteful bureaucracy and higher

costs without pressure from MUHCC and supporters.



Most Doctors Support National Health Insurance, New Study Shows

Selected highlights are printed below. The full survey results can be found at: [PNHP Survey Results](#). Reflecting a shift in thinking over the past five years among U.S. physicians, a new study shows a solid majority of doctors - 59 percent - now supports national health insurance.

...The findings reflect **a leap of 10 percentage** points in physician support for national health insurance (NHI) since 2002, when a similar survey was conducted. At that time, 49 percent of all physician respondents said they supported NHI and 40 percent opposed it.

Support among doctors for NHI has **increased across almost all medical specialties**, said Dr. Ronald T. Ackermann, associate director of the Center for Health Policy and Professionalism Research at Indiana University's School of Medicine and co-author of the study.

"Across the board, more physicians feel that our fragmented and for-profit insurance system is obstructing good patient care, and a majority now support national insurance as the remedy," he said.

...Other signs indicate that attitudes among doctors are changing. **The nation's largest medical specialty group, the 124,000-member American College of Physicians, endorsed a single-payer national health insurance program for the first time in December.**



Senate District 64A Meet with their MN State Representative Erin Murphy

About forty residents of Merriam Park, MacGroveland, Lex-Ham, Summit U and Ramsey Hill Neighborhoods gathered on Saturday, April 12th in the Unity Unitarian Church to meet with their Representative, Erin Murphy. The meeting gave constituents the opportunity to voice their concerns about the current health care system, voice support for the Minnesota Health Plan and ask their representative to support true health care reform.

In a respectful environment, both the constituents and Representative Murphy got the opportunity to hear each other. Rep. Murphy explained her position on the current health care bill making its way through the legislature. She also clearly stated what she needed from her constituents to more effectively be able to support them in this great social movement of our time.

If you would like to host a similar event with your representative, please contact us at

651-641-4073 , or e-mail me at info@muhcc.org.

We hope that you enjoyed the newsletter. Please forward the e-mail to people interested in health care reform, by clicking on the "forward email" link below.

Thank you,
Santwana Dasgupta
MUHCC Community Organizer



MN Citizens expect meaningful health care reform from our legislators. A reform that solves our health care crisis: covering every Minnesotan for less money, less waste, more value and better health

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The conference committee members are:

Senate: Senators Berglin, Lynch, Loury, Sheran, and Rosen

House: Representatives Huntley, Thiessen, Norton, Loeffler, and Abeler

MUHCC's goals remain the same. We will be contacting the legislators to ask that a cost study of reform alternatives be funded and point out that certain provisions, such as "report cards" do nothing to control the cost of health care

We will continue to ask that they consider the only strategy proven to provide universal health care AND control cost - A single payer universal health care system.

If you are a constituent of any of the legislators listed above, please contact us at info@muhcc.org

find out how you can help. Legislators need to hear directly from their own constituents.



Dying for Coverage in Minnesota

[Families USA](#) estimates that more than three working-age Minnesotans **die each week** due to lack of health insurance (approximately - 180 people in 2006).

Between 2000 and 2006, the estimated number of adults between the ages of 25 and 64 in Minnesota who died because they did not have health insurance was nearly 1,100.

Across the United States, **twice as many people died from lack of health insurance as died from homicide.**

Uninsured adults are more likely to be diagnosed with a disease in an advanced stage. For example, **uninsured women** are substantially more likely to be diagnosed with advanced stage breast cancer than women with private insurance.



We Need Your Financial Support

MUHCC's work is making a difference. We need your financial support to expand our reach. If everyone who supports the mission of single-payer contributes, we can create a social movement that will not be denied.

Please make a financial contribution today. Please go to www.muicc.org/donate.html for payment options.

We thank you for your support.